American Biologist in the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad

1736. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a section of senior Scientists at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad, protested against involvement of an American biologist in the proposed research on the sequencing of human genome;

(b) if so, whether Government have examined their opinion in favour of an indigenous research in this field, instead of involving any foreign hand in it; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and Government's reaction in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (PROF. M. G. K. MENON) : (a) Yes, Sir; some scientists from Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad have expressed concern on the possible Indian research programmes relating to sequencing of human genome and probable involvement of an American scientist in this.

(b) and (c). Availing the opportunity of the presence of an eminent Molecular biologist from the Human Genome Centre, USA, who was in India to attend a Symposium at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, in order to familiarise the Indian scientists, and to give them first hand information on the human genome sequencing project being implemented in the USA and elsewhere in the world, a meeting was organised by the Department of Biotechnology. A brief outline of this project was presented in the meeting. In the ensuing discussions after the meeting, Indian scientists discussed amongst themselve, the possibility of evolving our awn programme in this area which will be relevant in our national context. These meetings have been of an exploratory nature. The details of the indigenous R&D programme have not yet been evolved. However, the meeting did suggest some areas of priority, which would concentrate on sequencing disease-specific genome loci relevant to India and some microbial diseases prevalent in the country. The Department of Biotechnology is in the process of soliciting the views of major research institutions of the country on various R&D aspects of this programme.

U.S. assistance in obtaining human Genome

1737. SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether U.S. assistance has been obtained in sequencing of human Genome; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (PROF. M. G. K. MENON) : (a) and (b) No programme on sequencing of human genome has been started in our country so far. Only some discussions amongst the scientist have taken place. Therefore, the question of getting U.S. or any foreign assistance in this regard does not arise.

छात्रावास में अनुसूचित जातियों/अनुसूचित जनजातियों के छात्र

1738. **श्री अजीत जोगी** : क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) इस समय अध्ययनरत अनुसूचित जातियों/अनुसूचित जनजातियों के कुल छात्रों में ऐसे कितने प्रतिशत छात्र हैं जिन्हें सरकारी छात्रावासों में आवास